

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6859

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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US MISSION EC BRUSSELS 5434

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, ELAB, IT

SUBJ: FIAT LABOR TALKS SHOW PROGRESS

1. TALKS IN TURIN SEPTEMBER 11 BETWEEN FIAT OFFICIALS AND SENIOR METAL WORKER REPRESENTATIVES OF CGIL, CISL AND UIL, HAVE RESULTED IN TENTATIVE AGREEMENTS REGARDING FIAT'S NEED TO REDUCE AUTOMOBILE PRODUCTION BY 20 TO 30 0/0. MANAGEMENT PROPOSES EXTENDED LEAVE PERIODS FOR WORKERS, PARTICULARLY AT YEAR-END DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON. MANAGEMENT HAS PROMISED TO AVOID ANY FIRINGS OR REDUCTION IN INCOME AND IS ENDEAVORING TO AVOID PLACING ITS WORKERS UNDER THE WAGE INTEGRATING FUND SYSTEM (THE EMPLOYER-FUNDED SYSTEM, RUN BY THE SOCIAL SECURITY AGENCY INPS, WHICH SUPPLEMENTS THE EARNINGS OF WORKERS WHO ARE WORKING A REDUCED WORK-WEEK). THE UNIONS HAVE EXPRESSED A WILLINGNESS TO LOOK FAVORABLY ON MANAGEMENT'S DESIRE TO RATIONALIZE PRODUCTION METHODS THROUGH THE TRANSFER OF WORKERS TO OTHER JOBS, PROVIDING EMPLOYMENT AND PAY LEVELS ARE MAINTAINED.

2. THE TWO SIDES HAVE AGREED TO MEET AGAIN BEFORE SEPTEMBER 27.

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3. COMMENT: AN AMICABLE RESOLUTION OF FIAT'S EMPLOYMENT

PROBLEMS, IF FEASIBLE, WOULD BE AN IMPORTANT PACE SETTER IN MEETING THE LABOR MARKET PROBLEMS EXPECTED TO CONFRONT ITALY IN THE COMING MONTHS. IN ADDITION TO LONGER "VACANTION" PERIODS (PRESUMABLY PAID AT REGULAR RATES), FIAT IS ALSO COUNTING ON WORK FORCE ATTRITION TO AID IN MEETING THE NEED TO REDUCE PRODUCTION.VOLPE

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